

**Annual Report of Major Outputs & Outcomes**  
**Nebraska Occupational Safety and Health Program (Fundamental)**  
**July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014**

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS), Office of Epidemiology

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**Project Overview**

The aims of the Nebraska Occupational Safety and Health Program (NOSHP) are to collect occupational safety and health data from existing systems; develop a surveillance system for chemical poisonings; expand the Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance (ABLES) program; identify and interact with stakeholders; conduct educational outreach and disseminate information; assemble an occupational health advisory committee and meet yearly; and participate in the occupational health surveillance community.

**Accomplishments, Outputs, and Outcomes**

**Enhancing Surveillance Systems and Data Collection**

- All available 2011 Occupational Health Indicators were calculated and submitted to NIOSH.
- NOSHP submitted 2011 pesticide illness and injury data to NIOSH, becoming the 12th state to participate in SENSOR-Pesticide Program.
- Nebraska launched its expanded adult lead poisoning follow-up form within Nebraska's National Electronic Disease Surveillance System. The new process streamlines collection and management of case investigation data electronically linked with laboratory tests.
- Data linkage of Nebraska's blood lead levels database and drivers' license records was conducted to improve demographic information (i.e. county and race information) of lead poisoning cases from 2008 to 2012.
- NOSHP worked with internal programs to include injury prevention survey items on Nebraska's Worksite Wellness Survey of employers. Results of the survey show that 37% of Nebraska employers do not have a worksite safety committee, and 39% of employers do not have policies requiring seatbelt use.
- Worked with the Nebraska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) program to include industry and occupation questions on the 2014 survey.

*Potential outcome: NOSHP and our stakeholders have the ability assess trends using 12 years of indicator data. Three years of BRFSS industry/occupation data provide new methods for studying health behaviors and outcomes in Nebraska.*

*Intermediate outcomes: Participation in the SENSOR-Pesticides Program gives NIOSH richer data in its reporting system for pesticide illness and injury. Nebraska has also developed a new method for lead poisoning surveillance, allowing for more complete data to be reported to NIOSH for adult lead poisoning cases.*

**Establishing Partnerships and Collaborations**

- NOSHP joined the external advisory board of the NIOSH-funded Central States Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (CS-CASH) at University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and participated in the 2014 CS-CASH advisory committee meeting.

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- NOSHP received funding through a CS-CASH pilot project to collaborate with UNMC and the Nebraska Poison Center on improving pesticide poisoning surveillance and outreach.
- Established a partnership with NDHHS Health Promotion Unit and the Nebraska Safety Council's WorkWell (a worksite wellness committee) to study worksite wellness initiatives and evaluate WorkWell's Total Worker Health grant funded by University of Iowa's Healthier Workforce Center for Excellence.
- The Nebraska Occupational Health Surveillance Advisory Committee met for the third year in May, which included presentations, discussions, and priority setting. Fifteen stakeholders participated in the meeting representing educational institutions, state agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local public health.

*Potential outcomes: New collaborations with CS-CASH will improve surveillance of pesticide poisonings and agricultural injuries and illnesses that are of interest to both programs. Nebraska's new partnerships on worksite wellness will allow for better integration of injury and illness prevention and Total Worker Health in state worksite wellness initiatives.*

**Analyzing and Disseminating Occupational Health Data**

- Two Occupational Health Indicator reports were produced and published: A summary report of 2010 indicator data, and a report summarizing trends of indicators from 2000 to 2009.
- NOSHP conducted an in-depth analysis of Occupational Health Indicator #2: Work-related Hospitalization, including a study on falls among older workers. Maps highlighting rates of hospitalizations and emergency department visits by county were also published.
- Using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, NOSHP developed 12 "Nebraska Industry Spotlights," which were published on the program's website and newsletter.
- Data from Occupational Health Indicators were used to develop eight objectives and target rates for Nebraska's Healthy People 2020 initiative.
- Partnered with UNMC to analyze workers' compensation data on meatpacking injuries.

*Potential outcome: The dissemination of indicator reports, industry spotlights, and county-level hospitalization data can increase awareness of occupational health issues in Nebraska and can be used by researchers and public health professionals to prioritize occupational injury and illness outreach and interventions.*

*Intermediate outcome: As the result of NOSHP's data analysis and dissemination activities, NDHHS was able to include occupational health and safety objectives in its Healthy People 2020 initiative, representing a new state-wide platform to measure and evaluate the progress of occupational injury and illness prevention in Nebraska.*

**Outreach and Educational Activities**

- Published occupational health news, data, and educational materials on NOSHP's public website and added new topic pages on fatal injuries, lead, and pesticide poisonings.
- Reached workers and the public on social media via NDHHS' Facebook and Twitter pages.
- Initiated a new email-based monthly newsletter, *Occupational Health Watch*, and disseminated occupational health news, data, and program updates.

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- Released a health advisory on recognition and management of pesticide poisoning to all primary care providers, ERs, urgent care, and local health departments in the state.
- Distributed injury and illness prevention materials at the 2014 Nebraska Urban Pest Management Conference in Lincoln, NE and the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island, NE.

*Potential Outcome: Nebraska's newsletter reaches more than 50 occupational health stakeholders in Nebraska. Newsletter content is now used by the Nebraska Safety Council in its outreach to safety professionals and members. A wider network of stakeholders now can use NOSHP findings and recommendations in workplaces across the state.*

**Participating in the Occupational Health Community and Building Capacity**

- Participated in the national occupational health community by attending the 2014 CSTE Annual Conference and the Fall Surveillance Partners meeting, the SENSOR-Pesticides workshop in Denver, and CSTE Occupational Health Committee workgroups and webinars.
- Participated in regional and local epidemiology networks by representing NOSHP at annual meetings for WestON and the Public Health Association of Nebraska (PHAN).
- Increased program capacity by attending training courses for using BRFSS, GIS, and demographic databases.

**Presentations**

- “Lead Testing in Adults: Using Data Linkage to Improve Demographic Information in Nebraska.” Breakout Presentation. 2014 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.
- “Occupational Falls Among Older Workers in Nebraska, 2007–2011.” Poster Presentation. 2014 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.
- “The Good, Bad, and Ugly of Occupational Health Indicators.” 2014 Region VII Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association, Inc. (VPPPA) Conference, La Vista, NE.
- “Histoplasmosis Outbreak Among Day Camp Counselors and Attendees.” 2014 Western States Occupational Network (WestON) Sixth Annual Meeting Golden, CO.
- “Pesticide Poisoning in Nebraska: Surveillance Systems, Research, and Emerging Issues.” Seminar Presentation: University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Public Health, Department of Environmental, Agricultural, and Occupational Health, Omaha, NE.

**Publications and Reports**

- Nebraska Occupational Health Indicators Report, 2013 (Data Report)
- Nebraska Occupational Health Indicators Report, 2000–2009 (Data Report)
- Rates of Work-Related Hospitalizations and ED Visits, Nebraska, 2008–2012 (Maps)
- Fall-related Injuries in Construction (Factsheet)
- Nebraska Industry Spotlights (12 Factsheets)
- Hazard Alert: Heat Illness at Work (Factsheet)
- Preventing Lead Poisoning in Adults (Brochure)
- Lead Dust Clean-up and Control (Brochure)
- Pesticide Poisoning Prevention (Radio Public Service Announcement)